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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7719th meeting
Thursday, 16 June 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Meek
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Modibo Keita, Prime Minister of Mali, and I request the Protocol Officer to escort him to a seat at the Council table.

The Council is honoured by Mr. Keita's presence among us today.

Mr. Modibo Keita, Prime Minister of Mali, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/498, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annadif.

Mr. Annadif (*spoke in French*): I am particularly honoured and pleased to be here in the Council today, exactly five months after I assumed my functions at the head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), on 15 January 2016, and three months after the Council's memorable mission to Mali on 4 and 5 March, when it visited Bamako, Mopti and Timbuktu.

This is therefore the first time that I am appearing before the Council in order to present the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498). I welcome this opportunity afforded me and I commend the Council, on behalf of the men and women of MINUSMA, who are working with determination day and night to execute the mission that the Council has entrusted to them in resolution 2227 (2015), adopted on 29 June 2015.

I welcome the presence here today of an important delegation from Mali, led by His Excellency Prime Minister Modibo Keita and including my dear friend Abdoulaye Diop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration.

Since the Council's visit to Mali last March, the evolution of the situation unfortunately remains worrying. Several factors justify that concern.

First, and as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, one year after the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, it is clear that neither the signatories, much less the international mediation team, are satisfied with the pace of its implementation. This slowness, which is difficult to understand, is about to compromise the entire process, including the setting up of joint patrols and other security arrangements. While the Agreement is a package, for some time the debate has seemed to reduce it to the putting in place of interim administrations, which unfortunately are also slow in becoming operational. As such, we welcome the compromise reached among the Malian parties two days ago on the sidelines of the ninth meeting of the Agreement Monitoring Committee. MINUSMA remains fully committed on that matter, continuously using its good offices and other tools at its disposal, and is ready to support the immediate putting in place of interim authorities.

Secondly, as the Secretary-General states in his report, the security situation has deteriorated significantly in recent weeks. Although since its deployment, in 2013, MINUSMA has held the sad distinction of being the deadliest of the currently deployed United Nations missions, what has happened this year is even more serious and should challenge us to act. From February to May 2016 — a period of four months — 19 peacekeepers were killed due to terrorist actions, including 12 in the month of May alone. Adding to that the seven others who died from other causes, such as accidents and diseases, the toll rises to 26. And the total rises to 27 when we include the United Nations contractor who was killed on 31 May. The figures are even more distressing if added to the losses suffered in

the course of Operation Barkhane and those of Mali's defence and security forces and among Malian civilians.

As I have often said, many such losses could be avoided if our troops were better trained and equipped, especially when it comes to armoured personnel carriers. Moreover, the attack on a MINUSMA convoy in the area of Mopti on 29 May — the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers — serves to tragically illustrate that the terrorist threat is increasingly spreading to the centre and the south. That trend carries with it the threat of contagion, which must not be forgotten.

Since the recent attacks, MINUSMA has taken a number of steps to be more proactive and to improve efficiency and responsiveness. I understand the general skepticism and disillusionment in that regard, but, in view of the situation in 2012, there are many signs of hope. As highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, there has been progress with regard to the peace process, even though, as I said moments ago, the pace of the Agreement's implementation suffers from slowness, which should be avoided. Allow me to mention three examples of that progress.

The first is the strict adherence to the ceasefire observed by all the Malian parties that signed on to the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. In addition, dialogue continues to be the preferred means among the parties.

The second example pertains to the continuing efforts by the Malian Government in the establishment of a solid legal and institutional framework for the Agreement's implementation. In that regard, the draft decree of 18 May on establishing the National Council for Security Sector Reform under the authority of the Prime Minister represents a significant advance from the perspective of reconstituting the security and armed forces. Decrees were also approved to set up other commissions, including on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR).

Finally, in terms of cantonment, about eight sites are nearing completion, which should allow for the start of the DDR process — a process that includes two other crucial dimensions, namely, the integration of former combatants and managing violent extremism.

Among many others, those positive elements provide a solid basis for moving forward. It is absolutely crucial to enhance mutual trust among the signatory parties, as that is a dimension that sometimes hinders implementation.

The weakness of the State in the north of the country and the lack of effective control over land by other signatory parties where they are present have given way to an increase in terrorism, organized crime, banditry and intercommunal tensions. The more we fall behind in implementing the Agreement and actually managing those challenges, the more we risk further weakening the peace process.

It would be desirable that the next MINUSMA mandate take into account the challenges I have just mentioned. There is a need for an enhanced posture for MINUSMA. Given the determination of the enemies of peace and the magnitude of the recent deadly attacks, the recommendations of the strategic review set out in the report of the Secretary-General are in line with that objective. As such, it is necessary to increase the capacity of both the force and the police in terms of personnel, equipment and air cover. Without those capabilities, which have bee repeatedly requested, we risk hindering and undermining the Mission; providing them will save lives. There is also a need to make more explicit the fact that the mandate of the Mission authorizes it to conduct proactive and preventive operations to fulfil its responsibilities in terms of protecting both civilians and its personnel. Beyond that, MINUSMA alone cannot resolve the whole host of Mali's security challenges. Only increasing the strength of Mali's defence and security forces will serve to meet that sovereign function, and hence the assistance requested in terms of support for the Malian forces. The restoration of State authority depends upon it.

However, that issue must be part of a regional strategy in which various initiatives, such as the Sahel Group of Five, the Nouakchott process, the Economic Community of West African States and others, are called on to play a more prominent role. The presence of Operation Barkhane on the ground strengthens such initiatives. The situation in Mali is affecting the region as a whole. Recent attacks in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso illustrate the fluidity of terrorist groups and the interdependence among countries in the fight against terrorism. In the face of this regional threat, we must strive to promote more effective coordination and to increasingly operate within a logic of synergies and resource sharing.

I cannot conclude without telling the Council that I remain optimistic, even if my optimism is measured. It should also be stressed that there is no alternative to peace. The status quo of neither peace nor war only benefits the enemies of peace. The presence here of a large delegation headed by the Prime Minister of Mali reassures us that the hardest part is behind us, although we must not forget that time is our greatest enemy.

Today it is clear that all Malians, beginning with the most sceptical, are increasingly taking ownership of the Agreement. A year ago the people of Kidal were protesting its signing. Today the same populations take to the streets of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu to demand its prompt implementation. Similarly, the Malian people eagerly and hopefully await the new mandate that the Council will confer on MINUSMA.

The President: I thank Mr. Annadif for his briefing and his exemplary commitment.

I now give the floor to Prime Minister Keita.

Mr. Keita (Mali) (*spoke in French*): You, Mr. President, understand the great importance we attach to this meeting. My first words are to congratulate you for the outstanding manner in which you have been guiding the work of the Security Council since the beginning of the month and, above all — I repeat, above all — for the relevance of the items that you have included in the agenda of the Council. Mali congratulates France for its monthly presidency and welcomes in particular the fact that, under its enlightened leadership, the Security Council will in a few days proceed to renew the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Mali will always remember the date of 11 January 2013, when President François Hollande, responding favourably to the Malian authorities' request, authorized the deployment of Operation Serval, which made it possible to halt the advance of terrorist groups.

I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the excellent manner in which the Arab Republic of Egypt presided over the work of the Council during the month of April.

Allow me also to reiterate, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, the profound gratitude of the people and the Government of Mali to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, his Special Representative, Minister Mahamat Saleh Annadif and his predecessors, Mr. Mongi Hamdi and Mr. Bert Koenders, for their invaluable efforts in support of peace and stability in Mali.

The Security Council's numerous visits to Mali attest to the Organization's strong interest in Mali and its people. I sincerely thank the Council for such attention. I would like to express the gratitude of the people and the Government of Mali to the various countries, subregional, regional and international organizations, previous members of the mediation team, who are now members of the Monitoring Committee of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, which emerged from the Algiers process. Our appreciation also goes out to the countries that are active on the ground helping to restore peace and security in my country.

Many victims, civilian and military, national and foreign, have fallen on Malian territory. The toll of casualties, already heavy, as mentioned by the Special Representative, has worsened in recent months with the deterioration of the security situation. The month of May was particularly deadly for MINUSMA: just as the world was commemorating the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, that cerulean blue was disrupted by sandstorms. This is an unacceptable situation. We reverently pay tribute to the memory of the victims, and we offer our heartfelt condolences to their families and to their countries.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Mali, we welcome with great gratitude the invaluable contribution of MINUSMA to our country's stabilization process. And we express our profound appreciation to the United Nations and the troop-contributing countries.

The delegation of Mali takes note of the report (S/2016/498) of the Secretary-General under consideration and thanks Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSMA, for his briefing, which focused on the implementation of the Agreement and the recommendations to the Security Council with regard to renewing the MINUSMA mandate. We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General recalls the progress made towards implementing the Agreement. In that regard, we thank the Secretary-General for the tribute he rendered to President Keita, as well as for his leadership and his firm, total commitment to the implementation of the peace agreement in its entirety.

As we commemorate the first anniversary of the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, we are pleased to note that hostilities between the Government and the signatory movements have ceased, as the Secretary-General recalled. While a few misunderstandings might have arisen between the signatory movements, they managed to resolve those disputes through intra- and inter-communal meetings. That reconciliation process should be supported by all actors. It has been established, as the Secretary-General's report thankfully underscores, that the Government of Mali has made enormous efforts that eloquently illustrate its determination to honour its all commitments.

For our part, we will focus on two key issues emerging from the report of the Secretary-General, namely, political and institutional reforms and defence and security matters.

In the area of political and institutional reforms, during the consideration of the previous report (S/2016/281) of the Secretary-General, on 5 April (see S/PV.7665), the delegation of Mali informed Council members that, on 31 March, the National Assembly of Mali had adopted a law a law modifying the territorial municipalities code. As members are aware, the law, initiated by the Government of Mali, is the legal provision that paves the way for the establishment of the interim authorities.

The compliance of the provisions of the law with the Malian Constitution was decided by a competent court, thereby ending all forms of dissent. The President of the Republic signed the law, and the Government adopted an implementing decree. In that respect, I must point out that there must be no lingering doubt about the willingness of the Government of Mali to bring the process to fruition. While there were disagreements with respect to interpretation and approaches on how best to advance the process, the Malian parties remained Malian parties.

Fortunately, as the Secretary-General has recalled, the Government of Mali and the signatory movements agreed a few days ago to a memorandum of understanding that sets the timing for critical operations, including for the setting up of the Operational Coordination Mechanism in the regions, the appointment of interim authorities, the redeployment of the Administration and the delivery of basic social services. That is an important step forward.

The process of revising the Constitution is under way, and a review commission was set up with the task of ensuring that the provisions of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali accord with it.

As Council members know, the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission was set up in an inclusive manner and is already operational.

With respect to matters of defence and security — an important point — the implementation of the Agreement must be comprehensive and complete, which is why it is imperative to move forward on other important and urgent issues, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the quartering of troops. The Government has provided the Operational Coordination Mechanism with vehicles for joint patrols and is waiting for the conditions to be met by all parties — and I mean by all parties — to achieve success in the operation. The Government has played its part in that regard.

We would remind the Council that, in addition to political, institutional, security and defence measures, the Government of Mali has continued its development activities on the ground, in places where security conditions permit it, particularly through projects and programmes already under way, such as an emergency programme for the revival of development in the North and programme for reconstruction and economic recovery. The Government of Mali has also developed a specific strategy for development of the northern regions, which includes a plan for implementing the Agreement that allows — and must allow — regular follow-up on all its commitments.

The establishment of a lasting peace in Mali naturally needs the efforts of all parties involved in the process — the signatories — as well as the international community. For its part, the Government of Mali has fulfilled all its obligations. Never has its good faith objectively failed, and its commitments, including in keeping the peace, have always gone in the direction of the fulfilment of the Agreement. Moreover, the actions of the Government were the subject of a memorandum submitted to the Security Council. The memorandum eloquently illustrates the determination of the Malian authorities to effectively and comprehensively implement the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

I therefore appeal to the other Malian parties for greater commitment and greater effort, at a time when we are at a turning point, when our people, having

suffered enough, are still unfortunately having to wait to enjoy the dividends of peace. Each day of delay in the implementation of the Agreement is obviously one more day won by the enemies of peace, those who have sworn to see the peace process fail, who have bet against the peace process. We must remember this.

I appeal to the international community, through the Agreement Monitoring Committee, to exercise its role of guaranteeing that the parties respect their commitments by assigning responsibilities in accordance with article 54 of the Agreement.

The dismantling as soon as possible of bases and checkpoints by all of the Agreement's signatory movements is a sign of goodwill and reflects effective compliance with the requirements of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation. Furthermore, the drafting and transmission of lists of combatants within a specified period of time — lists that we are still waiting for — will allow for joint patrols to become operational and for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and the quartering of troops to begin.

All that is expected to make it easier for the interim authorities to work, for basic social services to be provided and for the reconfigured Malian defence and security forces to be deployed throughout the national territory. The return, resettlement and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons remains a concern. The safety of people and property is at stake. We would like to express our deep gratitude to the friendly, fraternal countries that have, in the pure tradition of African hospitality, generously hosted Malians on their soil.

In resolution 2227 (2015), the Security Council considers applying sanctions to all those who are a threat to the implementation of the Agreement and who do not set themselves apart from terrorist groups. It is useful and urgent that those provisions be implemented. But the Government of Mali hopes that, with deep involvement by all stakeholders, such extreme measures will not be necessary.

I congratulate the Agreement Monitoring Committee for its efforts aimed at overcoming differences and allowing progress to continue unimpeded. The Government hopes that the plan of action to implement the Agreement, developed by the National Coordinating Committee and communicated to all stakeholders, including the Agreement Monitoring Committee, is an effective assessment tool.

The Government of Mali welcomes the unanimity that is emerging with respect to the hostile nature of the environment in which MINUSMA is operating and the need to make adjustments to change its situation. There has been an increasing number of terrorist attacks, which have grown in complexity. Unfortunately, MINUSMA peacekeepers have become a prime target for terrorists. On behalf of the people and the Government of Mali, I reiterate my expression of gratitude to the troop-contributing countries for all the sacrifices they have made in order to bring about a final settlement of the crisis in my country.

My briefing today should challenge and invite us to reflect on the need to take into account the environment and the context in which peacekeeping operations are deployed in order to enable the Blue Helmets to achieve their mission of saving lives and restoring and stabilizing peace. The Government of Mali welcomes the Secretary-General's recommendations on strengthening MINUSMA's operational capabilities. We welcome in particular the fact that MINUSMA's mandate will provide support for Malian authorities as they strive to stabilize the main towns, especially in the northern regions, in order to remove threats and take active steps to prevent armed elements from returning to those areas. In that regard, as the Special Representative mentioned, Mali's defence and security forces provide the basis for the restoration of State authority throughout the national territory. Mali's armed forces, who are on the front line in the fight against terrorism, are and remain the first legitimate bulwark in protecting the Malian people and our national borders. They deserve the support of the international community.

In general, the Government of Mali believes that if the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 45 to 55 of his report are endorsed by the Security Council, it would allow MINUSMA to carry out its stabilization and protection-of-civilians mission. While taking note of the recommendation of Secretary-General for an increase in Mission personnel, I recall that the Government of Mali has always felt that MINUSMA's effectiveness must also be ensured via strengthening its operational capacities, which, in our view, requires a stronger and more active position; a redefinition of the rules of engagement; support for the armed forces of Mali, accompanied by operational coordination; and support for regional counter-terrorism initiatives, including those of the Sahel Group of Five,

the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union.

It is a platitude, but terrorism is a global threat that concerns all countries. To effectively fight this phenomenon, we must coordinate our efforts. We would like to express our sympathy and compassion to all the peoples of the world who have been affected and who have suffered greatly as a result of acts of terrorism, unjustifiable in any form.

Given the persistence of the terrorist threat in Mali and in the region, ECOWAS leaders, at a meeting in Dakar on 4 June on the occasion of the forty-ninth Ordinary Session of the Heads of State Meeting, reiterated their commitment to respect the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the State of Mali. The Heads of State and Government expressed their concern about the deterioration of the security situation in Mali, which has been marked by a resurgence in terrorist attacks targeting the Malian defence and security forces, the United Nations forces, the French forces of Operation Barkhane and civilians. This situation is a serious threat to the entire subregion. Also at the conference, the Heads of State and Government urged the Security Council to take the necessary measures to strengthen MINUSMA's mandate and provide it with the appropriate means and equipment to adapt it to the security context, which threatens peace and security throughout the region and which has genuine potential for spreading.

We are pleased, after having listened to the briefing by the Under-Secretary-General, to note that this decision by the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS dovetails with the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the issue. We hope that the Security Council will support the idea of redeploying the defence and security forces throughout the national territory once the interim authorities have been put in place and in compliance with the mechanisms provided for in the Agreement on Peace. The importance of such redeployment not only complies with all United Nations resolutions, which rightly recall the primary responsibility of the Government of Mali when it comes to security and protecting civilians, but it is also an essential condition for the effective return of the Administration and basic social services throughout the country. In that regard, the next mandate should authorize friendly forces, namely, those of MINUSMA, to support that process and ensure that the requirements of human rights and international humanitarian law be taken into account.

I would like to recall that the Secretary-General has on previous occasions called our attention to the need to uphold human rights in the context of the conflict in Mali. With respect to human rights violations, I am happy to announce that the Malian Minister of Justice and Human Rights has established, together with MINUSMA's Human Rights Division, a monthly dialogue mechanism. The mechanism, involving the Minister of Justice and MINUSMA in Bamako, will make it possible to clarify many situations and dispel many misunderstandings. However, I assure the Council that the Government of Mali is fully committed to the defending and promoting human rights. I take this opportunity to ask that all appropriate measures be taken to enable the diligent implementation of an international commission of inquiry, which we have asked the United Nations for since July 2014.

I thank Mali's partners for their engagement and support during the international conference for Mali's recovery and development, jointly organized by the Government of Mali and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on 22 October 2015 in Paris. We hope that the pledges of support will be fulfilled so that the necessary funds for the economic, social and cultural development of Mali can be mobilized on time. It would also be useful to mobilize the necessary funds for the smooth functioning of the Agreement Monitoring Committee in Bamako to allow it to fulfil its commitments.

For its part, the Government of Mali will continue to honour its commitments, and in particular all its commitments within the framework of the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. That is a reflection of the personal determination of the President Keita, who has provided every opportunity to the peace and reconciliation process and has just appointed a High Representative for the Implementation of the Agreement. The person he appointed, Ambassador Diagouraga, who is with us in the Chamber. That is a reflection of the importance that the highest Malian authority attaches to the implementation of the Agreement.

I would like to recall the gravity of the security situation in Mali, the deterioration of which undoubtedly poses a threat to all our States. I have the pleasure to announce to all those who believed that there were

delays in the implementation of the Agreement that the signatories, movements and Government adopted by consensus a protocol of understanding, which will make it possible to establish the interim authorities to ensure the return of basic social services and the Administration and to contribute to the implementation of the Agreement. This took place just a few days ago.

In doing this, yes, there are delays, but it is beyond the control of the Government. For example, we focused the entire process on the interim authorities. And it was said that the Government of Mali was taking a long time to set up them. Everyone knows that we are a democratic country and that we had to respect that democracy when the Malian opposition attacked the draft law in court. We had to do that; we had to wait; and we had to respect the opposition, as it was acting within its capacity. That delay was was implied to signal that my Government had no desire to move forward.

Today hope has been restored. The Under-Secretary-General has said that he is optimistic, adding that it is measured optimism. He could add as well that it is optimism capable of overcoming resistance and meeting everyone's expectations.

For my final comments, I would like to express once again the gratitude of the people and the Government of Mali to the regional, subregional and international organizations and to all the countries that continue to provide their support to, and their solidarity with, the people of Mali. Long live the United Nations in the service of peace in the world. Long live international solidarity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to very warmly thank Mr. Keita, Prime Minister of Mali, for his very important statement and for being present with us today.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.